Africans Unite Against Child Abuse
Promoting the Rights and Welfare of African Children

“Breaking the Cycle of Fear”
Witchcraft, Juju and Safeguarding Victims of Human Trafficking

A compilation of presentations delivered at AFRUCA’s international seminar series held in November 2009, January 2010 and June 2010
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Introduction:
AFRUCA’s Work Against Human Trafficking

AFRUCA – Africans Unite Against Child Abuse was established in May 2001 to promote the rights and welfare of African children in the UK. We also work in partnership with other organisations in Africa and across Europe.

With offices in London and Manchester, AFRUCA works with UK practitioners working with children in the African community to raise awareness and educate people on issues affecting the welfare of children so we can all act to protect them from abuse and harm.

AFRUCA is also the main charity in the UK campaigning against the trafficking of African children into the country. We work closely with others to sensitize the African community - both in the UK, other countries in Europe, and in Africa - to the issues, provide support for child victims of trafficking and influence relevant governments’ policies and regulatory action.

Guided by the four “P’s” as laid down by the convention of the Rights of the Child: protection of children, prevention of violence, prosecution of criminals and participation of children in our programmes, we offer the following services as part of our anti-trafficking programme:

- Protection and Provision of Assistance to child victims of trafficking. This is a referral service aimed at helping trafficked children and young people access specialist legal advice, health, education and social care services.

- Child Participation through our Survivors Forum. A peer support group for victims to enable young people to provide each other with mutual support and assistance.

- AFRUCA has established a Theatre for Development Project that offers Drama/Dance and Music as a creative and culturally appropriate alternative to available psychological and therapeutic services. This project seeks to address some of these psychological and emotional needs of the young people using our services while helping them to gain new skills.

- Prosecution: we work closely with the crime prevention agencies in the investigation of cases, often acting as expert witnesses in immigration and criminal cases.

- AFRUCA sits on various national and international advisory boards to influence policies and practices on counter trafficking issues.

- AFRUCA has presented papers to various national and international conferences to help raise awareness and inform about trends and developments in child trafficking.

- Prevention: Community engagement to enable responses to the crime and enhance the safeguarding of African children/victims. We run regular educational and sensitisation programmes to help improve knowledge and understanding of the issues and how to help protect victims.

- 1 Million Africans Against Human Trafficking Campaign on FACEBOOK: the campaign has been launched by AFRUCA to raise awareness of the scourge of human trafficking and to encourage Africans to take a stand so that there will be no place for traffickers to operate and hide.

- Skills development for practitioners through training and seminars to help develop their knowledge and understanding of key issues so they can better safeguard victims.

- AFRUCA in Nigeria: the best long term solution to end human trafficking is to tackle the “supply” problem at its source. AFRUCA’s newly established branch in Nigeria will work on the ground to help combat some of the factors that lead to children being trafficked.
Chapter 1:
Background and Aims of the Seminar

This report focuses on the results of the three international seminars held in London between November 2009 and June 2010 which specifically focused on the link between witchcraft, Juju and human trafficking. These seminars were held not only to bring to light the issue of human trafficking as a serious and preponderant crime occurring within the United Kingdom but also to explore the unique role witchcraft and Juju play in the trafficking process.

Traditional belief in witchcraft and Juju rituals in Africa is very strong and traffickers are known to employ it to coerce and subjugate their victims. Many victims of human trafficking are made to take oaths of allegiance sworn to a particular deity in a shrine that is run by a Juju priest prior to and upon arriving at the destination they have been trafficked to. The ritual creates within victims the sense of fear, secrecy and confidentiality that binds them to their traffickers, ensures compliance, and guarantees they will work to repay the huge sums of money claimed to be owed for transporting them to Europe and for their upkeep.

Many victims, fearful of the repercussions of the oath taken are compelled to endure their suffering in silence without recourse to help or support. The fear of Juju makes it extremely difficult for agencies to support victims and for the authorities to investigate, prosecute and bring suspected traffickers to justice.

Figures from the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre indicated that between April 2009 and March 2010 an average of 59 referrals for victims of trafficking were reported per month. Out of that total 80% were reported to be non-EU nationals and one quarter of all referrals were minors. Perhaps even more shocking were figures from Africans which amounted to 258 victims. It is a sad fact that successful prosecution for trafficking in person in the UK is still low. There were 114 prosecutions for human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in 2008-2009 and 102 in 2009-2010. There were 31 convictions for trafficking for sexual exploitation in 2008 and 18 convictions in 2009. There were 10 prosecutions for labour exploitation for labour exploitation in 2008-2009 and 19 in 2009-2010.

These disappointing figures are indicative of the difficulty encountered in convicting human traffickers, a difficulty which in the case of African victims of trafficking can be attributed to the intentional use by traffickers of witchcraft and Juju as a fear inducing coercive strategy on those who are predisposed towards these beliefs.

The seminars arose as a response to this overt problem as it was evident that legal prosecutors and police investigators were not sufficiently knowledgeable of the complexity that surrounded the West African Human Trafficking enterprise and had only now began to come to terms with this dimension to the problem. Similarly UK practitioners and social workers who might be working directly with young victims caught under the spell of Juju and witchcraft would benefit greatly from the professional testimonies of those who had already experienced these difficulties.

The main aims of the seminar were to:

- Explore the role of Juju in the growth of human trafficking from the perspectives of law enforcement and anti-trafficking officers in both source and destination countries i.e. Nigeria and the UK.
- To examine the link between the trafficking of African women and children and the use of Juju rituals as a method of coercion and submission in source countries.
- To explore the role of Juju rituals in hindering victim support and in the prosecution of suspected traffickers through its disruptive effects on victim’s capacity to give truthful testimony.
- To explore how to empower victims of trafficking to overcome their fears of Juju, reclaim their lives and avoid being re-trafficked.
- Allow for practitioners and other stakeholders to network with each other and establish contact with guest speakers who are professionals in the field.
Chapter 2:
Belief in Witchcraft and Why Victims Succumb to the Actions of Traffickers

By Debbie Ariyo

Debbie Ariyo is the Founder and Executive Director of AFRUCA. She is a Campaigner, Researcher, Trainer and Advocate for the rights of victims of child trafficking. She has worked with and advises many national and international bodies on their counter trafficking work. She is a non Executive Board Member of the Independent Safeguarding Authority – the UK agency responsible for vetting and barring unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. She has presented many papers to conferences and workshops in the UK and internationally on the subject of children and women trafficking from Africa to Europe for exploitation.

The locus of belief in witchcraft and Juju is to be found in the deeply spiritual nature of many African people. The African is often described in his or her own words as a ‘believer,’ a religious person by temperament whose relationship with his or her faith takes the form of an entire and all encompassing way of life and not merely a set of held beliefs. Religion in this context has been perceived as a historic source of social stability and creative innovation within African societies. Despite the dominance of Christianity and Islam throughout Africa, traditional African beliefs play a big role in the religious psychology of most Africans despite their often pious adherence to one of the two monotheistic faiths. It is in these traditional beliefs that belief in witchcraft and the power of Juju lies.

Traditional beliefs often include a belief in spirit possession akin to Christian belief in demonic possession or possession by the Holy Spirit where the mind and body of a person is taken over. As with Christianity, an exorcism of some sort is required to expel the invading spirit. Spells, curses and oaths are also invoked and revoked via attending to the rituals and actions that are prescribed within the canon of traditional beliefs. The most shocking practice is the cases of ritual killing which includes the murder of children and albinos prevalent in countries including Nigeria, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The dimension towards which witchcraft and Juju aids the work of human traffickers is primarily through its utility as a means of control. As witchcraft alleges to have the capacity to access forces which can bestow wealth and also cause evil, witchdoctors or Juju priests are held in high esteem and command a great deal of respect in both rural and urban society. It is through this widespread sense of respect for such social figures that victims of human trafficking, mainly from Nigeria, on account of their own beliefs, are caught up in this web of control. The power of witchcraft is used to cause a fear of reprisal within people who have taken oaths with traffickers and Juju priests prior to them being trafficked. Although the power of witchcraft and those who practice it for whatever end is relative to the level of belief a person has in it, the evident effects it has on people is undeniable. Through the administering of trafficking oaths African human trafficking criminal groups have prospered whilst cloaking their activities in mystery and fear. Due to the severity and nature of its usage, witchcraft has been made into a criminal offence such as in some parts of Nigeria, in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cameroon alongside also the branding of children as witches. In South Africa and Zimbabwe however, there has been a reverse of these measures with a lifting of a previously implemented ban on the practice of witchcraft.

The use of witchcraft can also be construed as an alternative to asking for God’s help or favour. Traffickers and other criminals are known to use witchcraft to ensure the success of their operations. Despite this overt contradiction it is not at all uncommon for traffickers themselves to be deeply religious Christians who believe in and also practice witchcraft. Of course the sincerity of one’s religious beliefs must be called into question in the case of human traffickers.

Traffickers use the ritual of oath swearing as their most powerful weapon of coercion. Based on the accounts of the victims of trafficking we have worked with at AFRUCA, the rituals contain a great deal of symbolic and theatrical activities which help to enforce and heighten the psychological effect it is designed to have on the victim. The rituals always begin with being taken to a shrine of a priest. The kind of shrine will depend on what deity the priest serves and it is this deity who the oath is sworn under. The shrine will contain various symbolic features associated with the particular deity which can be used to identify a particular deity’s presence. Incantations are recited which serve to initiate the oath taking, other theatrics are also employed such as making the victim sleep in a coffin in order to drive the fear of death into him or her.
The ritual can also entail tying red or white cloth around the waist of the victim which symbolises blood and death as the consequence of disobedience. Victims are also forced to remove their clothes and stand naked heightening their sense of vulnerability.

More visceral theatrics include the drawing of victim’s blood into a padlock before it is thrown into a river symbolising how the victim’s life now belongs to the River Goddess. A live chicken is killed in front of the victim and its heart is removed in order for the victim to eat it with a drink of alcohol. The consuming of the raw heart symbolises the invisible connection between the victim and the particular deity of the shrine. In order to bond the victim even further his or her fingernails, head, armpit and pubic hair are cut and kept in the shrine so that the victim can be reached via these personal items. Victims are given incisions across their chest, waist, legs, thumbs, and on their head until blood is drawn. Lastly, victims are given a kola nut to eat which is traditionally thought of as a way to communicate with deities.

In the United Kingdom, victims of trafficking frequently display signs identifiable with witchcraft and Juju rituals. The grisly case of Boy Adam whose dismembered body was found floating in the Thames in 2001 was the clearest case of a child trafficked for a ritual killing in the UK. Aside from human trafficking, physical and sexual abuse has also been linked to the issue of witchcraft; examples include the case of a Congolese pastor claiming he could heal possessed women through having sex with them, as well as the multiple cases of pastors abusing children that had been branded as witches in violent exorcism rituals.

In its crusade against child abuse in its many forms, AFRUCA has initiated educational events in order to educate pastors and community members on the issue and its consequences. Through raising awareness, learning from the initiatives of others abroad, and by addressing the factors which perpetuate these situations: ignorance and poverty, it is hoped we can overcome and help put an end to such practices.

Note: As a direct result of attending one of these series of International Conferences, investigators at SOCA invited AFRUCA to produce an expert report to inform a criminal case involving trafficking, witchcraft and juju oath rituals. The suspects were convicted and received different jail sentences.
Chapter 3:
Witchcraft and Juju as Barriers to Effective Prosecution of Traffickers - Our Experience at New Scotland Yard

By Andrew Desmond

Andrew Desmond became a police officer in 1981 upon starting his career with Hertfordshire Constabulary working in and around Watford both in uniform and CID. He transferred to the Metropolitan Police in 1992 and was stationed at West Hendon, Barnet. As a detective he worked on the first community Safety Unit in Westminster investigating racially motivated and homophobic crime. From there he went to join the North West Murder Squad and trained as a Family Liaison Officer. He then completed five and a half years with the Specialist Crime Directorate New Scotland Yard Kidnap Squad. While with the Kidnap Squad, Andrew first came across human trafficking that involved organised crime networks from the Chinese community.

In 2007 Andrew was invited to join the Metropolitan Police Human Trafficking Team at New Scotland Yard, the only unit dedicated to investigating human trafficking in the UK.

Belief in witchcraft and Juju has been known to directly inhibit investigation into human trafficking cases by the police. In the United Kingdom the police are only just becoming aware of the nature of West African human trafficking criminal groups primarily of Nigerian origin and the effects of Juju and witchcraft on trafficked victims. Despite the prevalence of victims being trafficked from Nigeria, there has been very little prosecution of Nigerians for such offences. This is primarily due to the complications caused by victims’ belief in Juju. Very often there is not enough good evidence to obtain a conviction as witnesses are unable to give testimony due to the fear that they will have broken an oath and invited misfortune upon themselves. Unfortunately, due to a lack of appropriate skills in interrogating victims of trafficking known to have succumbed to Juju, victims are unable to provide enough details to be considered as genuine evidence.

Problems arise right from the start when investigators attempt to pry more basic facts from their witnesses in order to learn more about the situation which can lead towards the identification of perpetrators. However, trafficked victims often give fallacious stories when first interrogated usually in fear of being in trouble for the crimes they had committed after they were trafficked into the country such as; drug dealing, prostitution, benefit or credit card fraud, or working in illegal drug factories. Police officers must convince victims that despite the fact that they might have been involved in crimes prior to their discovery, a greater criminal misdeed has been committed against them by their traffickers. Establishing a relationship of trust between the victim and the investigating officer is crucial towards the victim's own testimony. If he or she tells the truth then the victim is be considered a witness of truth and a successful case can begin to be built.

To exemplify the difficulties faced by the police in human trafficking cases it is prudent to look at a case study. The names of those involved have been changed. Barbara was a teenaged Nigerian girl from Benin City who was trafficked into the UK. By the time Barbara was eleven both of her parents had died and she moved in with her uncle and aunt who owned a market stall. She was taken out of school and forced to work in the stall during the day while at night she was made to do house chores. Her uncle was disposed towards beating her frequently and when she turned 14 and began to mature physically he started sexually assaulting her and eventually began raping her whenever her aunt was not home. One day a man named George who was believed to be a family friend came to their house and mentioned how his wife who was in the UK needed someone to help with the housework. Barbara jumped at this opportunity as she thought it would allow her to get away from her abusive uncle. Before leaving with George for the UK she was taken to a Juju priest at a traditional shrine to undergo a ritual. The priest stripped her naked before cutting her body in several places and rubbing chalk into the wounds. A live chicken was then killed and its heart was removed and given to Barbara to be consumed along with a drink of alcohol. Finally the priest removed Barbara’s bodily hair and underwear and placed it in a vessel which was kept in the shrine. She was told by the priest that upon arriving in the UK, if she was to disobey George, she would incur the wrath of the Mini-Gods, the gods who had sanctioned the oath, whom would punish her with nightmares, madness and even death.

Once Barbara arrived in the UK and George’s house she soon realised that George was not married nor was Barbara there to be a home helper. She was given clothing and a wig and was told by George that she was to have sex with strangers and that if she did not he would use Juju to kill her. When she was
not having sex with clients she was forced to have sex with George and the security guards at the premises.

Barbara eventually fell pregnant and upon her realising this told George who told her that he would take her to a hospital to ‘have it taken out.’ George did not do this however and as time passed by Barbara began to grow bigger.

George used Barbara to attract more clients who especially wanted to have sex with a pregnant woman. It was when George threatened to take Barbara for a late abortion that she decided to try to find a way out of her predicament. She begged a regular client who had taken pity on her to help her escape. The client whose name was Dean gave her a mobile phone and arranged to see her when George was out of the house. They both managed to escape without the security guards noticing. Dean initially wanted to take her to an organisation in London however Barbara pleaded to be taken out of London as she feared that George might be able to find her. He took her to the train station and bought her a ticket for Glasgow giving her a piece of paper with the address of the Scottish Refugee Council written on it.

Upon arriving in Glasgow and finding her way to the Refugee Council, Barbara explained her version of what she had endured to the local police who in turn informed the London Metropolitan Police. When investigating officers came to Glasgow to interview Barbara they encountered several difficulties. Barbara was unable to give her account in clear English and a local Edo translator was not available. Barbara gave the London investigators largely the same account as what she had given the Scottish police and she was reluctant to expand on it. She offered no further details on the house she was kept in stating that she could no longer remember and when asked if she could draw what it looked like she said that she could not draw. During the interview she was emotional and unresponsive to officers and only elicited a reaction when it was suggested by the officers that she might be regurgitating a story given to her by her traffickers. In order to bring the investigation forward the officers wanted to bring Barbara back to London to identify the house where she was kept after she eventually admitted it was somewhere in the area of Barking East London. When this was put to Barbara she refused to leave Glasgow stating that she was scared George would find her. The officers tried to convince her that she would be safe but she resisted stating that if she came to London she would die as the Mini-Gods would have to punish her for disobeying George.

It was at this period in the investigation that the officers realised there was a genuine reason for Barbara’s initial reluctance to comply and for her irrational fear of confronting those who had abused her. Investigation into Barbara’s case has come to a standstill due to the lack of evidence available however the case signalled to police the need to broaden their methods of investigation in obtaining the right information. In Holland police have been making progress in similar situations through cooperating with anti-trafficking organisations in Nigeria able to locate the shrines where the victims first underwent their Juju rituals. By destroying the vessel of their personal items and body hair the victims similarly destroy the oaths they took with the Mini-Gods and relinquish the hold the Juju has upon them. There is also close cooperation with faith groups where victims who may be Christian are reassured of the fact that God Almighty is far more powerful than the Mini-Gods who can do no harm to the person. Ultimately the outcome of such cases as Barbara’s has been to highlight to trafficking investigators that police service on its own is not sufficient for achieving the results necessary towards fighting human trafficking, instead; faith groups, NGO’s, and the community must all join in and become part of the fight.
Chapter 4:
Addressing Human Trafficking at the Source: Countering the Power of Juju on Victims - Our Experiences at NAPTIP Nigeria

By Godwin E Morka

Godwin E Morka is the head of the Lagos Zonal Office of the Nigeria-based NAPTIP, the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters, and a Child Development Specialist with more than ten years in the field. He has served as a consultant and resource person on women and children’s rights to Nigeria’s Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Social Development, as well as UNICEF Nigeria on various projects. He was initially recruited as Chief Research Officer for NAPTIP. Working with more than 70 officers and specialists, Godwin has taken the fight against trafficking to every part of the six states of South West Nigeria and beyond. Godwin holds a first degree in Mass Communications, a Masters in Business Administration and a postgraduate diploma in Theology.

In order to gain a more sophisticated understanding of human trafficking and its relationship to witchcraft and Juju it is necessary to address both phenomena at the source country for many of the victims rescued in Europe: Nigeria. With a population of 148 million, Nigeria accounts for 57% of West Africa’s population with three out of every five West Africans being Nigerian. According to estimates in 2005, 96 million Nigerians live under the poverty line and just little over half of the population live on less than a dollar a day. Under such conditions the prevalence of human trafficking has unfortunately become culturally accepted as a way of life with Nigeria as a source, transit and destination country for traffickers. As a country of origin victims are trafficked to Italy, Spain, Morocco, Benin Republic, Netherlands, the United Kingdom and many more places. As a country of transit and destination victims are brought in from Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Niger, Chad and the Ivory Coast. Trafficked girls are used for domestic service, street trading and commercial sexual exploitation. Boys are used for domestic service and forced labour on plantations, farms, quarries and also in order to engage in petty crime. The majority of children who are trafficked to Europe originate from Edo state predominantly with a portion coming from Delta, Akwa Ibom, Kano, and Borno states. It has also been reported that women from Moldavia, Belarus, Ukraine, China and the Philippines are trafficked into Nigeria.

The push factors which help to facilitate the trafficking of persons include; extreme poverty, bleak social realities, greed, ignorance, peer pressure, lack of education and unemployment. Some of the pull factors include; the high profits gained from trafficking and the low risks it incurs. On July 7th 2003, the Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act was passed in Nigeria which prohibited all forms of trafficking in persons and protected children and adults against criminal networks. The law established penalties ranging from monetary fines, imprisonment, forfeit of assets and passports, liability for compensation of victims, to prison sentences ranging from 12 months to life. As a result, the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) was established to enforce the law making Nigeria one of the few countries in the world with an anti-trafficking law and an agency set up to combat human trafficking.

NAPTIP’s mandate includes: investigating suspects for violating the provisions of the Act; prosecuting before state and federal high courts all those persons reasonably suspected to have committed an offence under the Act; seeing to the counselling, rehabilitation and reintegration into society of victims of trafficking; carrying out programs to increase public awareness; scholarly research into causes and solutions to the trafficking of persons; coordinating efforts and activities with other government agencies and NGO’s; and lastly establishing and strengthening bilateral and multilateral agreements with source, transit and destination countries used for the trafficking of persons.

NAPTIP’s achievements since beginning its operations have been widespread; they have achieved the successful prosecution of 63 offenders, established seven zonal offices, they have offered psychosocial medical counselling and family tracing to over 3,580 victims as well as trained successfully up to 600 victims in various vocations and enrolled over 150 victims in various schools. They have aided in elevating Nigeria to Tier 1 of the United States’ ranking of nations in the battle against human trafficking. NAPTIP has established the Victims of Human Trafficking Trust Fund and cooperated with UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNICRI, UNODC and agencies within destination countries like the UK, Finland, Netherlands, Spain and Italy.
It is by now common knowledge to us that West Africa and Nigeria in particular is rife with traditional beliefs and practices coexisting alongside Christianity and Islam. One such traditional belief is that of Juju and it is the phenomenon of Juju which has become closely linked to the activities of traffickers.

Understanding the exact nature of Juju and its relationship to human trafficking is integral towards stopping the activities of traffickers. The term ‘Juju’ can be used to describe a charm or object superstitiously believed to embody magical powers. It falls under the practice of the use of charms associated with witchcraft. Belief in Juju exerts tremendous psychological pressure on those under its spell and can actually cause death and serious misfortune. Belief in Juju is not limited to the illiterate but is also prevalent amongst the elite and educated members of society. This underlying belief in Juju is fostered further by the presence of Juju priests who operate shrines within communities. Trafficking victims are forced to swear oaths at shrines in their local communities in order to instil further fear and compliance into them. Part of the ceremony includes taking a ritual bath in a concoction of water, animal blood, herbal powders and alcoholic drinks. Victims are made to drink a mixture of alcohol and to eat raw chicken hearts and livers as part of the ritual. Body parts such as finger nails, pubic hair, menstrual blood, as well as personal items such as photographs and underwear are deposited at the shrines to exert maximum psychological pressure on victims. There have also been cases of victims being subjected to a second round of oath taking once they reach their destination.

This practice of oath taking serves to keep victims bonded to their captors who claim to be owed huge sums of money. Traffickers use violence and intimidation to enforce the psychological bondage the victims are under. This often causes for victims to refuse to cooperate with law enforcement officers or testify in court against traffickers due to fear of death. The traffickers are fully aware of the effect that Juju has on intervention efforts in the event of their victims being liberated. As more than 80% of transnational trafficking involves the administering of oaths on victims, Juju poses a major problem towards the efforts of NAPTIP. In NAPTIP’s early years this was a major challenge as due to the cultural implications of Juju, the Agency had to tread with caution by first carrying out advocacy with traditional institutions including leaders within the Juju priestly community. NAPTIP had to try to enlighten the Juju priests about the scourge of human trafficking and its link to their traditional practices. Upon gaining their confidence NAPTIP was able to raid Juju shrines and arrest priests who were implicated in human trafficking cases. After the retrieval of personal items from the shrines the priests were then made to revoke the oaths victims have taken which caused for many of the victims to become instantaneously more cooperative. The Juju priests are then used to testify against traffickers in court and then like victims they are later put under witness protection programmes to avoid reprisals from the trafficking gangs.

The phenomenon of Juju remains a major challenge to law enforcement especially in the Western world where the metaphysical dimension to trafficking cases often baffles and confuses investigators and social workers. As the phenomenon is embedded in traditional beliefs it must be handled with sensitivity. Victims must be counselled with sympathy and empathy for their psychological state, law enforcement agencies must form strong alliances with local figures and groups in order to meaningfully assist human trafficking victims who may be under the influence of Juju. In Europe, social workers and investigators must develop the ability to identify victims of human trafficking even when they refuse to divulge information about themselves or their traffickers. As soon as the usual elements of trafficking - i.e. loss, seizure or lack of relevant travel documents, absence of means of sustenance, no clear residential address, reluctance to give a clear account of how he or she entered the country - have become discernible, such a person should be classified as a victim of human trafficking and should be assisted. Lastly, in the event of such persons being deported from European countries and back to Nigeria, they should be informed about NAPTIP and how the agency is willing and able to help them upon their return.
Chapter 5:
Working with Victims of Trafficking - Addressing Juju as a Hindrance to Safeguarding Victims in Italy

By Dr Esohe Aghatise

Dr Esohe Aghatise is the Founding Director of Association Iroko Onlus in Turin, Italy and a lawyer with a doctorate in International Economics and Trade Law. She is also an ethno-clinical cultural mediator who has worked for more than 15 years with victims of trafficking in Italy. She is a United Nations Expert on Trafficking in Persons. She was honoured in 2007 by the US State Department and nominated a “Hero in the fight against modern day slavery.” She has won other recognitions for her work. Before coming to Italy in 1992 for her postgraduate studies she taught petroleum law, international law, and constitutional law at the faculty of Law, University of Benin. She has researched and published articles on legal, trafficking, and other issues in national and international journals. She has also produced a short film on trafficking entitled ‘Journey of No Return’ (Viaggio di Non Ritorno) which is being distributed in Nigeria and in different parts of the world as a preventive measure against trafficking.

The International Labour Organisation estimates that a minimum number of 2.5 million people are trafficked worldwide in any year. In a recent UN report it was stated that in 2006 21,400 victims of human trafficking were identified in 111 countries. These victims were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour. UNODC estimates that sexual exploitation constitutes the most commonly identified form of human trafficking (80%). Of all the trafficking victims in the world, more than 80% are women and girls and of this, 70% are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The UN ‘Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children’ (otherwise known as the Palermo Protocol) also acknowledges that most trafficking is for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation. For this reason, following previous international UN human rights instruments, the Protocol does not separate trafficking and prostitution. It recognises that exploitation for prostitution and trafficking cannot be separated.

The physical consequences of trafficking of persons include direct physical injury such as bruises or broken bones, indirect injuries such as chronic headaches and pervasive body aches from trauma, insomnia and disrupted sleep patterns, damage to the reproductive system, drug and alcohol dependency, and unwanted pregnancy. The psychological consequences include high levels of anxiety, memory loss, depression, dissociation, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Due to the preponderance of female victims of trafficking, human trafficking can be considered a gender based violation of human rights. Women and girls trafficked for labour exploitation frequently encounter and endure domestic and/or sexual violence. The dynamics of trafficking include: the use of coercion and threats; intimidation; emotional, physical, sexual and economic abuse; isolation and the use of family members to either recruit victims or to threaten and keep them under control. The profile of traffickers include: organised crime rings, family and community members, ‘mom and pop’ operations, husbands and boyfriends, pimps, diplomats and their wealthy compatriots, and formerly trafficked victims e.g. the ‘madams.’

Over the years, there have been various campaigns to eradicate trafficking. Decades of organising and activism bore fruit in five UN Human Rights Conventions including:
1. The Convention Against Slavery (1926)
4. The Convention on the Rights of the Child; (1991); and
5. The Trafficking Protocol to the UN Convention against Transnational organised Crime (2000), which contains the first internationally, agreed definition of human trafficking.

The UN ‘Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children’ (otherwise known as the Palermo Protocol) priorities trafficking in women and children by:
- Criminalizing trafficking;
- Providing assistance & protection to victims;
- Seeking to prevent trafficking through international cooperation and information sharing.
The Protocol provides the first internationally agreed definition of human trafficking and has obtained signatories from 117 countries with 124 other independent parties.

With regards to trafficking for sexual exploitation, the demand by prostitution consumers provide the economic incentive for international trafficking of persons, and there exists a growing consensus that addressing demand is the key to the prevention of trafficking for the sex trade. The nature of demand in the sex trade is both global and local, it is global in the sense that it drives sex trafficking and violates fundamental human rights, and it is local in that it is occurring everywhere in villages, towns, and cities and is patronised mostly by men who are part of the core fabric of our local communities (Sigma Huda, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking).

In Italy, investigators and researchers have identified the use of Juju and witchcraft practices as essential components in the overall process of the trafficking of Nigerian women and girls into Europe. The impact of Juju on victims includes social, psychological, physical, mental and emotional turmoil and is a hindrance to victim protection and restitution. It also serves as a hindrance to the successful arrest and prosecution of traffickers.

With regards to the issue of Juju in the assistance and treatment of victims, cultural information and sensitivity is of the utmost necessity towards understanding the trafficked victims and to handle the effects of Juju. Traditional doctors and Juju practitioners are useful in countering the employment of juju in victim recruitment and subjugation and the innovative techniques of cultural mediation and ethno-psychiatry are also to be employed accordingly. Ethno-psychiatry examines not only other cultures’ understandings of mental illness or abnormal states but also methods of treatment other than standard Western procedures. The practice of ethno-psychiatry works on the presupposition that one’s mental states are shaped by the culture you are brought up in. It follows therefore that a truly objective psychiatry is neither possible nor advisable in treating the psychological conditions of victims of trafficking who are believers in Juju, without an input of the cultural perspective of the victim.

At the level of policy in Italy, Article 18 of the Legislative Decree of 25 July 1998, n. 286, had a huge impact on the provision of assistance to victims of trafficking and on the possibility of the police, assisted by victims, to arrest and prosecute traffickers. Article 18 allows for the authorities to grant residence permit to victims and to provide them with protection and job training services through accredited NGOs.

Lastly, policy efforts in some European countries, in accordance with the UN Protocol Provisions, are addressing the demand for prostitution as a way to fight against trafficking for sexual exploitation. Sweden is one such country which, as a forerunner to the Palermo Protocol, enacted laws which require the arrest and prosecution of prostitution buyers. At the same time Sweden has initiated an educational campaign against demand for paid sex which has resulted in a recorded 40% drop in the number of women being prostituted. Norway and Iceland similarly embarked on such a campaign recently. The Swedish model of tackling demand for prostitution has been adopted by other jurisdictions such as the Philippines, South Korea, Norway, Iceland and the State of New York in the United States.

To conclude, the prerequisites for the successful elimination of trafficking in persons require attention and effort to be distributed across three main areas; addressing the demand for paid sexual services; addressing the economic and financial imbalances in the global economy and how they give rise to trafficking in countries of origin of victims; and lastly, addressing gender issues affecting women and working for the achievement of real gender equality world-wide.
Chapter 6: Cooperation between Nigeria and the UK in Combating Child Trafficking

By Simon Chuzi Egede

Simon Chuzi Egede read Law at the University of Jos where he graduated in 1985 before being called to the bar after the mandatory course of study at the Nigerian Law School, Lagos in 1986. He established his own legal firm Simon Egede & Company Jos in 1991 where he served as a Principal Partner. Within 3 months he was appointed as a Company Secretary/Legal Adviser to Radio Benue Corporation, Makurdi where he was appointed as the General Manager/Chief Executive in July 1995. He was transferred to the Benue State Ministry of Justice as a Deputy Director in charge of Civil Litigations where he successfully prosecuted many cases up to the Supreme Court between 1998 and 2007. He was appointed the Special Assistant to the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, the Chief Law Officer of Nigeria in August 2007. In February 2009, he was appointed as the Executive Secretary for the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters, NAPTIP. During his tenure, Nigeria has been promoted to the tier-I list in global ratings of human trafficking endemic nations on account of the outstanding and rare achievements recorded by NAPTIP.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that 54% of the Nigerian population lives below the poverty line. As poverty increases so does the general vulnerability of people to the snares of traffickers. Human traffickers exploit this poor economic situation in Nigeria which forces parents to give their children to rich aunts and uncles in the hope that they might receive a better life abroad. The placement and fostering of children through extended family networks is a widespread and socially accepted West African practice; however it is precisely through these accepted family safety networks that traffickers find a vulnerable avenue to exploit through posing as a family member of the victims they traffic in and out of different countries. The other social factors which can be linked to child trafficking include; a general ignorance of what trafficking is, high fertility rates and population growth, gender inequalities, the usage by traffickers of Juju ceremonies and oath taking rituals which is endemic throughout West Africa, a general lack of social services for the rural poor, and lastly inadequate international and regional bilateral agreements against trafficking. Nigeria has affirmed its commitment to tackling the menace of human trafficking through the enactment of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law which occurred on June 14th 2003. The Law calls for the prevention and combating of trafficking in persons with particular attention to women and children, protection and assistance of victims of trafficking with respect to their human rights, and the promotion of cooperation among state parties in order to meet those objectives. Another outcome of the Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act 2003 (TIPLEA) was the establishment of the National Agency for Prohibition in Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) which was to act as an enforcer of the provisions of the law.

The National Agency for Prohibition in Traffic in Persons functions as a multi-disciplinary crime fighting administrative entity which endeavours to fulfil its statutory responsibilities including: the enforcement of the act, the coordination of all laws on traffic in persons and related offences, adoption of measures to increase the effectiveness of eradication of traffic in persons, enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement agents to suppress traffic in persons, and also the taking charge, supervising, controlling and coordinating of the rehabilitation of trafficked persons. As trafficking in persons is a transnational and trans-border crime with high stakes and lucrative returns, the need for strategic initiatives, collaboration and cooperative actions among countries arises as a necessity in order to ensure its effective combating. Since its inception NAPTIP has facilitated bilateral agreements with various countries, for example in 2003 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Nigeria and Italy’s National Anti-Mafia Bureau, and in 2004 Nigeria signed another MOU with Benin Republic which resulted in the handing over of six Nigerian victims of trafficking from Benin and the rescuing of 169 Bennoise children from quarries, farms and brothels in and around Nigeria.

With regard to the United Kingdom the relationship between both countries has been marked by the fact that Nigeria’s recent history is deeply intertwined with that of the United Kingdom going back over 200 years to colonial times. In November of 2004 an MOU on cooperating to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons between Nigeria and the government of the United Kingdom was signed by Harriet Harman the former British Solicitor General and Nigerian Attorney General Akinlolu Olujinmi. In the agreement, both nations signed a bilateral pact expressing their mutual desire to effectively check the menace of human trafficking and work cooperatively towards achieving shared objectives. The objectives of the memorandum were to:
Facilitate international cooperation, develop common goals and prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons.

- To protect victims of trafficking, and to provide them with assistance to enable reintegration into their original environment.

- To provide mutual support, capacity building and strengthening of institutional capacities to effectively prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons.

Despite the positive initiative enshrined within the 2004 MOU, figures of trafficked victims in the UK have risen with a reported 71 women trafficked into prostitution in 1998 and expert predict that actual figures are suggestively much higher. In light of this a reinstatement and revival of the pledges contained within the agreement is much needed by both parties. Potential action in this regard could include; signing of a new MOU between the UK and Nigeria which captures current developments, offering of technical assistance in the form of training on the most recent best practices between the two nations, and development of an exchange programme which would include attachment opportunities for officers of the two nations engaged in the work of fighting human trafficking in order for both parties to grasp first-hand the particular difficulties and limits each nation encounters.

From what has been mentioned above, the challenges of child trafficking appear to have become more daunting, notwithstanding the efforts at combating the menace as traffickers’ devise new and ingenious methods of exploiting the vulnerability of victims as well as thwarting the law and committing grave injustices. The Nigerian government through the determination and resilience of NAPTIP continues to endeavour to improve their efforts and on account of this the activities of NAPTIP have received worldwide recognition with Nigeria becoming categorised in Tier 1 of the US Department of State Trafficking in Persons report. The designation indicates compliance with the minimum standards of the Trafficking and Violence Protection Act. In addition partners such as the UNODC, UNICEF, IOM, ILO and others have been willing collaborators with NAPTIP in combating child trafficking. As these global collaborations continue to yield fruit it is hoped that further cooperation with the UK will allow for the development of stronger ties and give greater impetus to both parties to the fight against trafficking.
Chapter 7:
Seminar Conclusions and Recommendations

The seminars resulted in a set of conclusive remarks and recommendations for those working at both the practical and policy level that would improve the way human trafficking of African origin is treated and tackled:

- Juju is a word which refers to the supernatural power ascribed to certain objects such as charms and amulets which can in turn be used for benevolent or malevolent ends. The harnessing and use of such supernatural powers contained within particular objects is considered witchcraft.

- Juju is a source of power for evoking curses and pledging oaths which if broken would result in a grave penalty. Due to the strength of such traditional beliefs in witchcraft and Juju in Nigeria, traffickers are widely known to use such methods to coerce and subjugate their victims.

- The majority of African people are deeply religious and spiritual, while this is a source of social stability for the most part it also gives rise belief in and fear of various malevolent supernatural entities.

- The reality of belief in witchcraft and Juju and its ability to do physical harm should be accepted as a perfectly rational aspect of a believer’s psychology and should not be viewed critically or mockingly.

- Police officers in the United Kingdom need to be trained accordingly and develop the necessary skills required to recognise and identify possible victims who are under the grip of belief in Juju and therefore are not behaving or cooperating with investigators in a sensible or logical way for good reason.

- Authorities in Africa and Nigeria in particular need to reach out to Juju priests from within the rural communities and educate them regarding the illegal status of initiating trafficking oaths on behalf of traffickers as well as on the evils of the entire trafficking industry.

- Further cooperation between NAPTIP and law enforcement agencies in the UK should be developed so as to coordinate efforts both in regards to apprehending perpetrators of human trafficking crimes but also in regards to the welfare of liberated victims.

- Further research and attention must be given to the areas of cultural mediation and ethno-psychiatry so as to establish their usage as a legitimate and effective way to treat victims of trafficking in the UK and Europe.

- Governments should be encouraged not only to tackle the supply of trafficked persons for sexual exploitation but also the demand for prostitution within countries through implementing legal measures against the purchase of sex.

- In the UK further efforts must be made by third-party organisations to establish better intercommunity relations within the country’s African community. Enhanced unity within the African community is the necessary condition towards combating traffickers who operate and hide within that very community.

- The United Nations needs to call for and encourage even more countries to sign its ‘Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children.’

- The 2004 Memorandum of Understanding signed by the UK and Nigeria ought to be renewed and revived in light of the current circumstances and driven by the need to increase cooperation between the two nations for the sake of fighting the menace of trafficking.
Appendix

Press Release

18 February 2010

For immediate release

AFRUCA Raises Concern Over the Growth in the Trafficking of Persons from Africa to the UK

AFRUCA - Africans Unite Against Child Abuse has expressed a major concern over the growing spate of human trafficking from Africa to the UK and is calling for urgent action to address the problem.

Recently released figures by the UK Human Trafficking Centre show that between April and December 2009 alone, over 200 Africans were referred to the agency by charities and others as victims of human trafficking. Most of them, including children, are from Nigeria which had 89 victims, Sierra Leone with 13 victims, Kenya with 5 victims, Ghana with 3 victims, Zimbabwe with 16 victims, Eritrea with 5 victims, Uganda with 14 victims, Somalia with 5 victims, and Sudan with 1 victim. Most of the victims had been exploited as sex slaves, for domestic servitude or used to claim government benefits.

Of great concern is the growing number of victims who are made to undertake oath rituals as a cruel form of coercion and subjugation by traffickers. Many victims are compelled to take oaths of allegiance, secrecy and confidentiality to bind them to their traffickers, ensure compliance and guarantee the repayment of the huge sums of money claimed to be owed for transporting them to Europe and for their upkeep. Victims, fearful of the repercussions of the oath taken are compelled to endure their suffering in silence without recourse to help and support. The fear of Juju makes it extremely difficult for agencies to support victims and for UK authorities to investigate, prosecute and bring suspected traffickers to justice. “The figure released by the UK Human Trafficking Centre reveals just the tip of the iceberg. We are certain that many more victims are trapped in exploitative and abusive situations and have no access to help so they can escape from their traffickers and seek justice”, said Debbie Ariyo, AFRUCA Director.

Cherifa Atoussi, Anti Child Trafficking Officer at AFRUCA said: “Most victims are trafficked by fellow Africans, in many cases by people they know, sometimes by their own relatives. They are exploited, abused and brutalised by fellow Africans in what is a multibillion dollar transnational criminal enterprise. Despite the preponderance of such occurrences, the UK African community remains largely ignorant of the reality and severity of this issue”.

As an immediate response, AFRUCA is hosting a community meeting on the 25th of February 2010 at the House of Commons, London. Chaired by the MP Emily Thornberry, the event aims to generate awareness through getting the African community to engage in open debate and discussion on their role as a part of the solution to this problem.

"Working on the premise that “awareness is half the battle”, we want the community to take a united stand against trafficking so that there will be no place for traffickers to operate and hide. That is why we are launching a new Facebook campaign: “One Million Africans Against Human Trafficking” at the event”, Cherifa Atoussi said.

“While Africans in the UK tighten relationships in and between communities to guard against such occurrences, it is necessary that Africans living in source countries increase their personal efforts and campaign tirelessly for their governments to increase effort on a national scale to combat the scourge of human trafficking. It is only through impassioned commitment and cooperation at both ends, the UK and Africa, that we will achieve such results”, she added.
NOTES TO EDITORS

1 AFRUCA – Africans Unite Against Child Abuse is the premier charity promoting the rights and welfare of African children in the UK and working exclusively with victims of child trafficking from Africa.

2 The UK Human Trafficking Centre is the UK government’s multi-agency centre that provides a central point for the development of expertise and cooperation in relation to the trafficking of human beings.

3 The “Trafficking of African Children to the UK: The New Slavery” event will be held at 6:00pm on Thursday 25th February at the House of Commons, Portcullis House. The event will be chaired by Emily Thornberry, MP for Islington and Finsbury, and will feature speakers including Nick Kinsella, Chief Executive of the UK Human Trafficking Centre, Debbie Ariyo, Executive Director of AFRUCA and Andy Desmond, Detective at the Metropolitan Police Service Human Trafficking Team.

4 For further information about AFRUCA and its work with children, please visit our website at www.afruca.org

5 For further information about AFRUCA’s event on the 25th of February 2010 and the Facebook “One Million Africans Against Human Trafficking” campaign, please contact Cherifa Atoussi on 0844 6608611 or email cherifa@afruca.org.

6 To join the One Million Africans Against Human Trafficking campaign, please visit: http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=314714899242&ref=ts
Nigeria: Juju Hinders Our Work, Say British Police

By Ibrahim Chonoko

1st March, 2010

The Scotland Yard Police in the UK has attributed the low conviction of criminals, especially those engaged in human trafficking, to the use of juju and witchcraft by criminal networks in Nigeria.

Detective Andy Desmond of the Scotland Yard Human Trafficking Team disclosed this at a community meeting against child trafficking in London, organised by Africans Unite Against Child Abuse - AFRUCA. http://allafrica.com/stories/201003010233.html
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